

## Grade 3 Sample Items

A complete research simulation task for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade will include seven items, with four Evidenced-Based Selected Response (EBSR) items, two Technology-Enhanced Constructed Response (TECR) items, and one Prose Constructed Response (PCR) item. Students will read a purpose setting statement for the task and then read the first passage. After answering EBSR and TECR items, the students will read the second passage. The students will answer additional EBSR and TECR items and then respond to the PCR item.

The sample items presented here demonstrate one of each of the types of items students will encounter when completing a research simulation task.

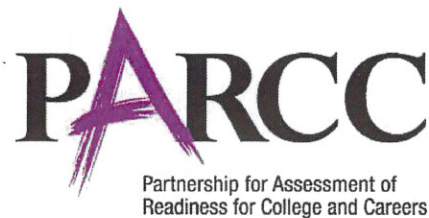
Each sample item presented includes information on (1) the advances in assessment and answers to the items; (2) an explanation of the alignment of the item to the standards and PARCC evidence statements; and (3) item scoring rules and rationale.

**Sample Items for Grade 3: Excerpt from *Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America* by Andrea Zimmerman**

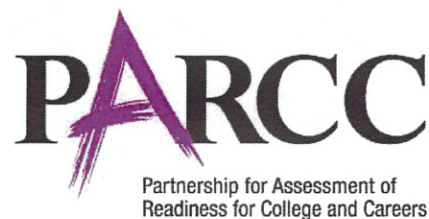
Sample Item 1: Questions	Sample Item 1: Advances and Answers
<p><b>Part A Question:</b> The article includes these details about Eliza's life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She wrote newspaper articles to tell others about what she saw in Alaska to inform those who had not been there. (paragraph 1)</li> <li>• She wrote the first guidebook about Alaska. (paragraph 1)</li> <li>• She was the first woman to work at the National Geographic Society, where she wrote many articles and books. (paragraph 11)</li> </ul> <p>What do these details help show about Eliza?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They show that she shared the benefits of her experiences with others.*</li> <li>b. They show she had many important jobs during her lifetime, but becoming a photographer was one of her proudest moments.</li> <li>c. They show that her earlier travels were more exciting than the work she did later in her life.</li> <li>d. They show that she had a careful plan for everything she did in her life.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Part A Item Advances:</b> The skills of reading closely and using textual evidence to make and support claims are critical in preparing students for college and careers. The first part of this Technology Enhanced Constructed-Response (TECR) item is a selected-response question. It begins with a list of key details from the text and asks students to make a determination, based on those details, that ties directly to the main idea of the passage. As reflected in this item, Standard 2 for grade 3 specifically asks students to recount key details and explain how they support the main idea, and Standard 1 asks students to support answers with explicit textual evidence. Answering this complex item will help prepare students for the culminating activity in this Research Simulation task—writing an article telling how two individuals changed America. In a complete task, each of the texts will be accompanied by Evidence Based Selected Response (EBSR) or TECR questions to help students engage with the texts. This sample set contains items associated with the first text, the “anchor” text, only.</p> <p><b>Part A Answer Choice Rationales:</b> Only Option A, the correct response, contains a statement that is a logical conclusion based on the details provided in the stem. The fact that Eliza wrote newspaper articles and a guidebook about Alaska, and then continued to share information during her tenure at National Geographic Society, shows she was eager to share her experiences. Option B is incorrect because although Eliza had many important jobs, there is no evidence that being a photographer was what she was most proud of. Option C is incorrect because nothing in the text</p>

	<p>indicates that Eliza’s earlier travels were more exciting than her later ones. Option D is incorrect because there is no evidence that Eliza had a careful plan for everything in her life.</p>
<p><b>Part B Question:</b> Ideas from paragraphs 1 and 11 were used to help you learn about Eliza. Click on <u>two</u> other paragraphs that include additional support for the answer in Part A. There are more than two paragraphs that include additional support, but you need to only choose <u>two</u>.</p> <p>[Note: in addition to the instructions within the item, the computer functionality will prevent students from selecting paragraphs 1 and 11 or more than two paragraphs total.]</p>	<p><b>Part B Item Advances:</b> Part B of this item demonstrates a valuable use of technology and a foundational requirement in the standards by asking students to interact directly with the text to select direct evidence for the claim in Part A. In this case, the technology allows students to choose from 19 possible answer choices, with 7 possible correct answers. Asking students to closely read informational text to gather additional evidence for their answer in Part A illustrates two of the key shifts in CCSS assessment: close reading of informational text and the use of textual evidence. As noted, there is more than one right answer.</p> <p><b>Part B Answer Choice Rationales:</b> Paragraphs 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 14 all provide additional details to support the correct answer in Part A (that Eliza shared the benefits of her experiences with others). Paragraph 5 shows Eliza wrote a book about her travels to Japan to “share her love of Japan with other Americans.” Paragraph 7 describes how Eliza uses the knowledge of the cherry trees in Japan as a basis for a plan to improve the area around the riverbank, thus bringing her experiences of Japan to others. Paragraph 8 shows Eliza sharing her idea of Japanese trees with the man in charge of the trees so that others can experience what she has seen. In paragraph 9 she again shares the knowledge with another caretaker, hoping to eventually share the trees with others. Paragraph 12 shows Eliza taking pictures for “Smithsonian,” further recording her travels so people can now visualize other places. Paragraph 13 shows that Eliza shares her knowledge many more times with caretakers, even though they didn’t accept her idea to plant the cherry trees. Paragraph 14 describes Eliza</p>





	<p>sharing her knowledge with Mrs. Taft so that ultimately the trees could benefit Americans that lived or visited Washington, D.C.</p> <p>All other eligible paragraphs provide helpful information to aid in comprehension, but they do not add additional details that support Eliza's determination to share her experiences.</p>
<b>Sample Item 1: Alignment</b>	
<p><b>Explanation of Alignment:</b> The item meets the PARCC Assessment Claim for Reading Information, as the question is based on an excerpt from <i>Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America</i>, and is an informational passage. Additionally, the item is aligned well to the two standards and the evidence statements listed because it asks students to determine a main idea in Part A, based on key details provided, and then find additional supporting details in Part B. The texts align to Reading Standard 10 because quantitative data place them in the 2-3 or 4-5 grade band, and qualitative analyses place them at grade 3.</p> <p>Sets of texts used in the PARCC assessments have a clear and meaningful relationship to each other. The tested concepts arise from significant points of comparison or integration of ideas, not from superficial or obscure connections. Also, text sets align with the CCSS requirements for paired or multiple texts at each grade level and are not paired without specific standards-based justification. For</p>	<p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim, Standards, and Evidence Statements Assessed</b></p> <p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim - Reading Information:</b> Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level complex informational texts.</p> <p><u>Standard RI. 3. 2:</u> Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI 3.2:</u></p> <p><i>The student's response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides an explanation of how key details in a text support the main idea.</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Standard RI. 3.1:</u> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI.3.1:</u></p> <p><i>The student's response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides explicit references to the text as the basis for the answers.</i></li> </ul>



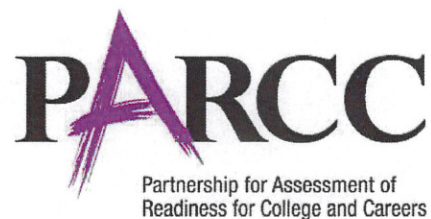
tasks that simulate research, one text is clearly appropriate to serve as an “anchor” text, providing foundational knowledge and leading naturally to additional reading and exploration.	
<b>Sample Item 1: Scoring Points and Rationale</b>	
<b>Scoring Rationale:</b> Past tests would have given credit for a right answer regardless of how a student arrived at the answer, but the PARCC assessment reflects the key shift of requiring close reading by offering full credit only if a student identifies both accurate comprehension (correct answer for Part A) and the correct support in Part B.	<b>Scoring Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 points are awarded when the student correctly chooses the answer to Part A (A) and two correct paragraphs in Part B (any two of the following paragraphs: 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13,14).</li><li>• 1 point is awarded when the student correctly chooses the answer to Part A and 1 correct paragraph in Part B.</li></ul>



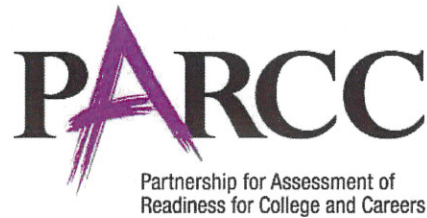
**Sample Items for Grade 3: Excerpt from *Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America* by Andrea Zimmerman**

Sample Item 2: Questions	Sample Item 2: Advances and Answers
<p><b>Part A Question:</b> Which statement best describes how the events in paragraphs 13 through 15 are related to each other?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They explain how Washington, D.C., would change if cherry trees were planted around the city.</li> <li>b. They show that Eliza found a new way to get cherry trees planted in Washington, D.C.*</li> <li>c. They compare the ways Eliza and Mrs. Taft tried to add beauty to Washington, D.C.</li> <li>d. They describe how Mr. Takamine gave Eliza the idea to bring cherry trees to Washington, D.C.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Part A Item Advances:</b> The first part of this EBSR question resembles questions that have traditionally appeared on reading assessments. However, it critically sets the stage for Part B, where students are asked to prove their answer by citing evidence from the text, which represents an advance in PARCC assessments. This item meets the standards, specifically Standards 1 and 3 for grade 3, by asking students to determine how events depicted in paragraphs 13 – 15 are related to each other (Part A), and then use evidence from the text to support that answer (Part B). In a complete task, each of the texts will be accompanied by EBSR or TECR questions to help students engage with the texts. This sample set contains items associated with the first text, the “anchor” text, only.</p> <p><b>Part A Answer Choice Rationales:</b> Option B captures the fact that Eliza, realizing that asking the men in charge of the parks to consider planting cherry trees had not worked for more than 20 years, decided on a change of direction: asking Mrs. Taft for help. Options A, C, and D explain relationships that may sound plausible, but none that accurately capture the relationship between events depicted in paragraphs 13 – 15.</p>
<p><b>Part B Question:</b> Which sentence from the article best supports the answer in Part A?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. “When they bloomed, the trees became clouds of pink blossoms.”</li> <li>b. “She kept trying for more than twenty years!”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Part B Item Advances:</b> Part B of this EBSR question takes the item in a new direction from past assessments, calling for students to show the evidence they used to help them determine the relationship between the events chronicled in paragraphs 13 – 15: Students are asked to comprehend that Eliza tried a new strategy after many years of failure (Part A) and to choose the option that describes the strategy she used to succeed (Part B).</p>



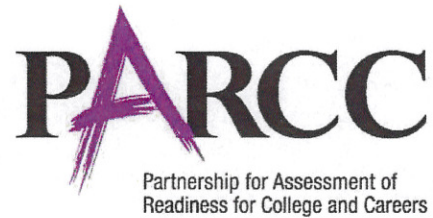


<p>c. “She wrote a letter to the president’s wife, Mrs. Taft.”*</p> <p>d. “With the help of Mr. Takamine, a generous Japanese scientist, they had the trees sent from Japan.”</p>	<p>This item demonstrates a level of complexity not seen in traditional tests in the past. The requirement for textual evidence in Part B illustrates two of the key shifts in CCSS assessment: close reading of an informational text and use of textual evidence.</p> <p><b>Part B Answer Choice Rationales:</b> Although Options A, B, and D are all sentences from the article, none of them describe the different approach Eliza took to try to get the cherry trees planted, enlisting help from another source. Option C, the correct answer, offers textual evidence of the change in strategy by showing that Eliza wrote to someone who was likely to have political influence—Mrs. Taft.</p>
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Sample Item 2: Alignment	
<p><b>Explanation of Alignment:</b> The item meets the PARCC Assessment Claim for Reading Information, as the question is based on an excerpt from <i>Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America</i>, and is an informational passage. Additionally, the item is aligned to the two standards and the evidence statements listed because it asks students to determine the relationship between events described in the text (in this case in paragraphs 13 – 15 illustrate a change in direction taken by Eliza) and then support their answer in Part A by finding textual proof of that relationship, which is when Eliza writes the letter to Mrs. Taft.</p> <p>The texts align to Reading Standard 10 because quantitative data place them in the 2-3 or 4-5 grade band and qualitative analyses place them at grade 3.</p> <p>Sets of texts used in the PARCC assessments have a clear and meaningful relationship to each other. The tested concepts arise from significant points of comparison or integration of ideas, not from superficial or obscure connections. Also, text sets align with the CCSS requirements for paired or multiple texts at each grade level and are not paired without specific standards-based justification. For tasks that simulate research, one text is clearly</p>	<p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim, Standards, and Evidence Statements Assessed</b></p> <p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim</b> - Reading Information: Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level complex informational texts.</p> <p><u>Standard RI.3.3:</u> Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI.3.3:</u></p> <p><i>The student's response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides a description of the relationship between a series of historical events using language that pertain to time, sequence and/or cause/effect.</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Standard RI.3.1:</u> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI.3.1:</u></p> <p><i>The student's response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides explicit references to the text as the basis for the answers.</i></li> </ul>





appropriate to serve as an “anchor” text, providing foundational knowledge and leading naturally to additional reading and exploration.	
<b>Sample Item 2: Scoring Points and Rationale</b>	
<b>Scoring Rationale:</b> Students able to demonstrate both accurate comprehension and to support that comprehension with evidence from the text are awarded full credit. Accurate comprehension results in partial credit.	<b>Scoring Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 points are awarded when the student correctly chooses the answer to Part A (B) and the answer to Part B (C).</li><li>• 1 point is awarded when the student correctly chooses the answer to Part A (B).</li></ul>

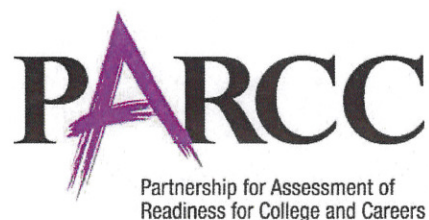


Sample Items for Grade 3: Excerpt from <i>Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America</i> by Andrea Zimmerman	
Sample Item 3: Questions and Standards	Sample Item 3: Advances and Answers
<p><b>Question:</b></p> <p>You have read two texts about famous people in American history who solved a problem by working to make a change.</p> <p>Write an article for your school newspaper describing how Eliza and Carver faced challenges to change something in America.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your article, be sure to describe in detail why some solutions they tried worked and others did not work.</li> <li>• Tell how the challenges each one faced were the same and how they were different.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Part A Item Advances:</b> Comparing and synthesizing ideas across multiple texts (grade 3 Reading Standard 9) and then articulating the findings in expository writing (grade 3 Writing Standard 2) are critical skills for college and careers, and PARCC expects students in grade 3 to start honing these skills. Traditionally, writing prompts have not called for the use of textual evidence in a student's response. In other words, prompts were often "stand alone," or not tied to a text, and without a text, students had to rely on prior knowledge to respond to prompts. However, PARCC has created Prose Constructed-Response (PCR) prompts that allow students to delve deeply into not only single but also multiple texts to gather evidence to analyze and compare, simulating the research process.</p> <p>Students are also required to demonstrate that they can apply the knowledge of language and conventions when writing (an expectation for both college and careers) as they respond to a prompt. This practice needs to start early in a student's learning, as evidenced by the expectations for the response to this question as discussed in the Alignment section below. PARCC's required combination of reading, writing, and language skills illustrate the integrated nature of the Common Core State Standards.</p> <p>Note that the prompt represents the culminating activity of a Research Simulation Task. Each text would be accompanied by a small number of EBSR or TECR items, including one vocabulary item that students would answer prior to writing the essay. The EBSR and TECR items are designed to help students engage fully with the texts before writing the essay. This sample set illustrates the kinds of items that would be included but is not a</p>

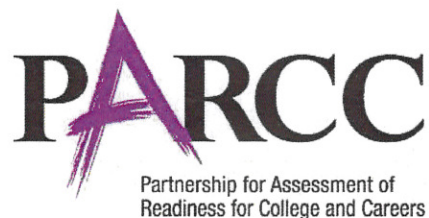


	complete set.
<b>Sample Item 3: Alignment</b>	
<p><b>Explanation of Alignment:</b> The prompt measures the claims for Written Expression, Conventions and the Knowledge of Language, and Reading Information. Because the student is asked to read and compare more than one informational text in order to respond in writing to a prompt based the texts, correctly using the conventions expected by the grade 3 standards, the item addresses multiple claims.</p> <p>The texts align to Reading Standard 10 because quantitative data place them in the 2-3 or 4-5 grade band and qualitative analyses place them at grade 3.</p> <p>Student responses to PCR items provide evidence of student mastery of all of the writing standards listed here, with some evidence measured explicitly and some evidence measured implicitly. In the classroom, teacher assessment of student skills where guidance and support is expected accounts for this factor is assignment of grades. For the PARCC assessments, assignment of rubric scores and the standard setting for performance-level descriptors will account for the understanding that large-scale assessment demands for purely independent work by</p>	<p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim, Standards, and Evidence Statements Assessed</b></p> <p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim - Written Expression:</b> Students produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3. 2:</u> Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3. 4:</u> With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3.5:</u> With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3.6:</u> With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3.7:</u> Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.</p> <p><u>Standard W.3.8:</u> Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.</p> <p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim - Conventions and the Knowledge of</b></p>

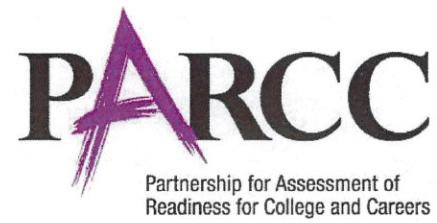




<p>students may impact student demonstration of some assessed skills.</p> <p>Sets of texts used in the PARCC assessments have a clear and meaningful relationship to each other. The tested concepts arise from significant points of comparison or integration of ideas, not from superficial or obscure connections. Also, text sets align with the CCSS requirements for paired or multiple texts at each grade level and are not paired without specific standards-based justification. For tasks that simulate research, one text is clearly appropriate to serve as an “anchor” text, providing foundational knowledge and leading naturally to additional reading and exploration.</p>	<p>Language: Students demonstrate knowledge of conventions and other important elements of language.</p> <p><u>Standard L.3.1:</u> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p><u>Standard L.3.2:</u> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <p><u>Standard L.3.3:</u> Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <p><b>PARCC Assessment Claim - Reading Information:</b> Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level complex informational texts.</p> <p><u>Standard RI.3.9:</u> Provides a comparison and contrast of the most important points and/or key details presented in two texts on the same topic.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI. 3.9:</u></p> <p><i>The student’s response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides a comparison and contrast of the most important points and/or key details presented in two texts on the same topic.</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Standard RI.3.3.</u> Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI. 3.3:</u></p> <p><i>The student’s response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides a description of the relationship between a series of</i></li> </ul>
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	<p><i>historical events, using language that pertains to time, sequence and/or cause/effect.</i></p> <p><u>Standard RI.3.1.1:</u> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</p> <p><u>Evidence Statement for RI. 3.1:</u></p> <p><i>The student's response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides questions and answers that show understanding of a text.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Sample Item 3: Scoring Points and Rationale</b>	
<p><b>Scoring Rationale:</b> The PARCC Condensed Scoring Rubric for Prose Constructed Responses, Grade 3, contains details for all components being measured within a student response. These components tie directly to the PARCC Assessment Claims.</p> <p>The scoring of PCRs will not happen until standard setting has occurred. After a group of students responds to the item in a tryout or field test, anchor papers (samples) will be selected to “anchor” each score point. Each of the samples will be annotated. These annotations will include explanations of how the sample papers exemplify (show evidence of) the traits described in the rubric. After the student responses and samples are reviewed, the generic scoring rubric will also</p>	<p><b>Scoring Points:</b> Please see the PARCC Condensed Scoring Rubric for Prose Constructed Responses, Grade 3, for details regarding the scoring for student responses.</p>



be tailored to create a specific scoring rubric for this Prose Constructed-Response item.	
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